531 Saturday, but not scratched until Sunday afternoon;
796 making them earlier is considered a sin." The Lithuanian Easter eggs, too, are hardly ever sold in the market. They are gifts of the godparents or the mother for the children and tokens for friends and for the clergy of the town. While the neighboring Letts know only eggs of one color, the Lithuanian margučiai are already attested in the sixteenth century. At the present time the old custom has remained alive primarily in the district of Trakai.

286 Weaving and Related Techniques

That Lithuanian folk art--we may think of the folk song or of the grave crosses, or of any branch at all--forms a unity in its innermost nature and /136/ has created an artistic style of its own, has been pointed out by many critics. The sphere of this art comprises the whole life of a rural culture with a rare compactness; one thing is related to the other, and as the last field, the village art of weaving harmoniously joins this circle.

Flax, harvested in one's own field, spun on one's own spinning wheel, woven on a peasant loom, has been a familiar material in Lithuania since very olden times. Connected with its processing was the song, whose rhythm followed the movement of the loom, and whose words extolled the weavers who knew how to weave fine patterns. Thus in this art there is nothing foreign; it does not rest in the hands of a few--every girl, every woman in the villages still knows it today. And old women still know today that ancient art of spinning where the flax wrapped around a distaff is spun off with the aid of a spindle which the spinner turns with her hand.

286 The colors, too, with which the threads
386 were dyed, were originally quite natural. They were produced from earth, iron ore, plants, birch

286 leaves, oak and alder bark, and the method was
386 guarded as a family secret. Their production was very laborious. The plants were broken up and cooked with the thread; the ashes of the plants were used as a stain. Always only the thread was dyed, never the finished fabric. Thus one obtained serene colors of unlimited durability. Aprons a hundred years old exhibit a quiet brilliance which is still enchanting today. Although the natural colors have gradually been supplanted by modern aniline colors, knowledge of the old coloring technique is still preserved in many peasant families.

286 The use of colors change. Brown, blue, and
301 red were probably the oldest colors. To them was
531 added green. The pattern originated on a white background. We can best recognize the Lithuanian interpretation of color in the juostos, those colorful decorative ribbons which /137/ serve as ribbons for belts and aprons, as fastenings of fur coats, and as decorations for the girls. They are distributed across the whole country, but show provincial differences both in the colors and in the patterns and techniques. Their coloration is analyzed in a fine manner by Karl Brammer: (44)

[113]

44. Karl Brammer, "Litauische Webereien," Litauenbuch, loc. cit., p. 52.

"The nature of complementary colors is grasped here with astonishing sureness; an error never occurs. Red and greenish blue, orange and cyanic blue, greenish yellow and violet are placed next to each other in striking fashion. Furthermore the skillful use of white with opposite colors has a very fine effect. From the use of red and yellow on a black background (*) it can be clearly be seen

* The latter occurs only very rarely. V.J.

that the relationship between dark and brilliant

colors is also very well known. Joy in an abundance of colors indeed exists among the Lithuanians, but not loud joy in loud, bright colors as among the Poles; rather, the nature of color is here much more deeply and clearly comprehended." In addition it may be noted that coloration in the Lithuanian weaving has undergone a development in the course of time--above all in the technique, which on the one hand considerably increased the number of available colors and on the other enhanced their brilliance. We can recognize this when we compare, for example, the thoroughly simple coloration of the oldest ribbons and aprons known to us with that of a later period. This means, however, no lessening of the value of the later colorful weaving patterns; and above all Brammer is right when he lays the principal weight on the sensitivity of the color composition. But just this sensitivity could only later unfold itself to full expression.

An actually inspired hymn to the colorful juostos is sung by another German artist, who was also brought to Lithuania by the World War: Hans Heinrich Schaeder. He writes: "The color is here still freer, since it is liberated from consideration of the body, the three-dimensional space, /138/ and lives only for the surface. The surface is infinitely delicate like the soft material of the ribbons; the color slings to it. One does not grasp the fact that here colorful threads are woven together; did not these patterns grow like flowers under a rising and setting sun? All the secreta and longings of the Lithuanian soul are hidden in these ribbons. These wonderful, serene colors, were they not subdued by the tears of the woman who did the weaving? This melody of lines and colored surfaces, is it not intimately related to the infinite sweetness of the Lithuanian songs?"(45)

45. Heinrich Schaeder, op. cit., p. 64.

In earlier times the juostos were never put

531
•286 on the market. Women and girls gave them to those
301 whom they loved. On an old juosta the beginning
[431] of a little yearning love song is woven in. A woven dedication mentioned by Kurschat (1911) reads:

I wove as I was able to, I gave it to
whom I wanted.
But I always believed that my beloved
should receive it.

Thus these ribbons often speak of a rare tenderness of feeling, and their colorful patterns seem illuminated by longing and love, by fate and sorrow. In many ribbons there were also, as Otto Glagau (1869) informs us, mottoes in English and French whose meaning the peasant girls naturally didn't know, but which remained preserved in certain families and were always imitated anew. Here, to be sure, we have forms of a later development, just as the occasional use of metal threads goes back to the influence of the Lyon silk industry in the eighteenth century. Otherwise one used in an earlier period only threads of flax, wool, and hemp; the use of silk, on the other hand, has arisen only in most recent times. Frequently these silk juostos are sold today as binders or crocheted together as table runners, but in the villages these uses are unknown.

The production of the juostos proceeds in three different ways. We know pintinės, austinės, and kaišytinės--/139/ i.e. a braiding, a weaving, and a darning technique. The oldest of them is the braiding technique, which is still practised in the north of the province of Aukschtaiten in the districts of Zarasai, Panevėžys, and Ukmergė, though it has become quite rare. (46) The threads

46. A. Rukštelė, loc. cit., pp. 22-23 and 46.

are laid over a board and then braided, beginning

1[juostas, i.e. colorful ribbons -- Analyst]

286 531 801 from the middle. Thus result two parts in which the same pattern begins at the middle and runs toward the outer edges. The ribbons thus produced, which can be well stretched, are especially wide. They usually contain a simple pattern of different stripes which cross each other. Their production no more demands equipment than that of the woven ribbons (juostos austinės), which today are the most familiar types and are distributed over all of Lithuania. The weaver ties the colorful wool threads from which the juosta will be made to a hook on the wall with one end, with the other to her belt, after she has wound the threads around a little stick and laid them parallel in such a way that half of the threads are on top and half on the bottom. Thus the warp is formed. With a shuttle in her hand the weaver pulls the cross threads--the so-called woof--through the lengthwise threads according to the pattern, and pushes each cross thread against the other with a kind of wooden folder [Falzbein]. The most difficult part is the stretching out of the pattern.(46)

46. A. Rukštelė, op. cit., pp. 22-23 and 46.

In contrast to these woven ribbons, the third, the darning technique (juostos kaišytinės), has today become about as rare as the braiding technique. Its home is the Suvalkijan area. In the darning technique the colored threads that produce the pattern are pulled through by hand. During the weaving itself, the colorful pattern is embroidered in and pulled fast with the next turn. This technique, for which the weaver needs a little hand loom, "represents considerable progress in the Lithuanian ribbon technique, brought about by the increased use of stylized flowers as weaving patterns, /140/ whose imitation would encounter insurmountable difficulties in the juostos austinės (woven ribbons)." (47)

286 (woven ribbons)." (47)
531.
[113]

47. Johanna Behr-Heyder, Cologne, "Litauische Volkskunst," Leipziger Ill. Zeitung, November 8, 1917, p. 10.

In analyzing the weaving patterns, which are almost exclusively of a geometrical nature, it is in most cases overlooked that the technique of weaving alone had of itself to lead to specific patterns. Certainly the many terms used today were given them only much later, names supplied by all kinds of visible things of the surroundings--the duck, the cuckoo, the hoopoe, the window, the broom, the rose, the fir tree, even the goat's hoof, and many others. That from the technique of weaving many similarities arose with peoples separated in space and time, is thus only natural. From the great variety of designs results the tremendous richness of this ornamentation, especially since the patterns occur in the most varied combinations. To discuss them in more detail is forbidden by the scope of this presentation, but there are certainly many hundreds of patterns.

While in western Lithuania decorative weaving is not so strongly cultivated--apart from Palanga, where primarily juostos with star and flower patterns are favored--the whole abundance of this colored ornamentation is concentrated in the area of Suvalkija, above all in the districts
291 of Marijampolė and Vilkaviškis. This area is
53 also the home of the famous tulip pattern and of
286 the colorful Lithuanian decorative aprons. Simple aprons are known also in the region of Zanavykai and Zarasai as well as in the province of Dzūkija, while in Samogitia they are completely lacking. Nowhere, however, is the coloration unfolded so subtly and the ornamentation to such a richness as in Suvalkija. On a brown, blue, red, or green background the ornament grows like a precious flower. Perhaps the most beautiful of these patterns, the tulip stylized in the most varied forms,

286 goes back to some symbolic representation, especially since the tulip itself was an unknown flower in Lithuania. The /141/ stylization has progressed so far here that practically only the term has remained. The tulip pattern is repeated on these aprons in a continuous scrollwork, or in fours in a square, or also in combination with characteristically stylized scrolls and leaves.

Galaunė says concerning these aprons: "They are known only in the province of Suvalkija and here and there in the sections of the Vilna area bordering on Suvalkija. They form here a kind of oasis, whose origins we are unable to trace today because of the lack of almost any data. This oasis is so self-contained that its influence has hardly spread in any direction. Ribbons similar to our juostos are found among a large number of our close and more distant neighbors, but the aprons with the tulip pattern woven in are completely unknown elsewhere." (48) It may be added

48. P. Galaunė, op. cit., p. 262.

that the High Lithuanians make only white woven aprons with red cross-stripes at the bottom end, while the aprons of the Low Lithuanians (Samogitians), also white, exhibit red lengthwise stripes.

The weaving technique for the Suvalkija decorative aprons is similar to that for the juostos kaišytinės; they are woven on the loom, and the pattern is set in during the weaving from colorful wool threads, so that it appears as if embroidered. Nothing certain can be said about age and origin of these aprons. We know only that the oldest of those now existing go back to the second half of the eighteenth century. Perhaps, as Galaunė assumes, they once had a symbolic significance and symbolized innocence and virtue. And perhaps they were so beautifully fashioned because they had no practical purpose to serve. (49) In Prussian

49. p. 266.

286 Lithuania they were in any case not known and
531 according to Vydūnas were only taken over from
[291] later immigrants. (50) Much of the beautiful

[15]

50. Vydūnas, Litauen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart (Tilsit, 1916). Emma Dethlefsen, "Über litauische Volkstrachten in Ostpreussen," Blätter für Heimatkunde und Heimatschutz, Vol. 3, Nos. 1 and 2.

Lithuanian decorative weaving is found today in the churches as altar covers, the ribbons as ornamentation on the alms bag.

As with all settled peoples, so among the Lithuanians a rural art of rug weaving--as /142/ is customarily developed among nomadic tribes as a folk art--did not exist in earlier times. The rugs and bedspreads woven today in the countryside, which are usually of one color and are frequently found in city houses, are of more recent origin. They borrow their manifold square circle or lozenge patterns from the heavy linen weaving which the peasant woman makes for her practical use. To set off the pattern in color either bleached linen is woven in together with unbleached, or a difference of tone is gained by weaving in hemp or cotton. These patterns, too, are beautiful and of great ornamental richness. From the point of view of age they represent the oldest Lithuanian weaving patterns. We find them in the coarse woolen towels as well as in the tablecloths that are laid out on festive occasions in the peasant houses. The hand towels are often decorated with artistic cross-stitch work, usually in red, primarily the decorative towels that do not serve for daily use. They formerly hung on the richly carved hand towel racks and are given only to guests to use. Their ends are formed by peculiarly braided lace, knotted by hand from the end threads of the weave. This is a very old technique that is still

286 practised today by the shepherd girls of the country.
531 Crocheted lace is in general rarer; nevertheless among prosperous farmers we often find decorative crocheting and openwork on beautiful and valuable bed linen.

[291] Gloves and stockings are firmly and closely knitted in several colors, the various threads being carried along on the reverse side. They frequently make their way to Germany, where they appear on the handicraft market as "Swedish" gloves. The most varied-colored ornaments are knitted in, dots and stars, together with flower patterns, and occasionally also animal patterns.
[431] These gay and strong gloves with their bright colors often serve as gifts, and the priest is always presented with them on his winter "calender journeys." In contrast /143/ to other handicrafts, in which, as we saw, old patterns are frequently used in a not so successful manner, their borrowing from the weaving technique in the modern knitted handiwork has an organic and altogether charming effect.

[292] In the Lithuanian folk costume, too, particularly as it has been awakened to new life after the first World War, art and taste are shown: the long colored pleated coat, the colorful bodice, the white shirt with the long embroidered sleeves--everything breathes cheerfulness and joy in colors (see the title picture).*

Therewith is closed the circle which embraces the Lithuanian folk art in all its branches. Many things could be only briefly touched, since the various older and more recent techniques of knotting, crocheting, and knitting can be described only with difficulty.

286 462 The whole realm of weaving with all its related techniques is exclusively the domain of the woman, while the man has chosen for himself those areas which above all demanded bodily strength or because of the size of the objects did not attract

* [Title picture was not included in HRAF reproduction -- Analyst]

•286 462 the woman. And perhaps it is due precisely to the artistic intuition and the more sensitive sense of color of the woman that her creations unfold a quite special richness in color and ornamentation in the fields of the small handicrafts. /Unnumbered page with illustration--Old Peasant Woodcut/

/145/ Chapter Four
The Spiritual Culture of the City

113 /Unnumbered note on Chapter Four/ A comprehensive presentation of the development of Lithuanian architecture does not so far exist. A brief sketch of the architecture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is given by K. Jasenas in Vol. III, No. 5 of his Visuotinė meno istorija (General History of Art), where we also find practically the only information on Lithuanian castle structures. An appreciation of the architect Vl. Dubeneckis, the builder of the Vytautas Museum, the art school, the state theater, and other public buildings, is given by P. Galaunė in Vol. I of the almanac Prošvaistė (1937). In addition, the valuable monograph by the same author, Vilniaus meno mokykla, 1793-1831 (The Art School of Vilna) (Kaunas, 1928), should be mentioned. Also, the presentation of Lithuanian painting, sculpture, and music is so far limited to sketches and separate articles. (Cf. for example Galaunė, l'Art Lithuanien (1934); Jasenas, History of Art, III, 8, with carefully selected illustrations; etc.)

A. The Architecture

181 1. Historical Preliminaries

The investigation of the cultural elements of Lithuanian national life led us to the conclusion

10:Baltrušaitis R-4, 5 (no date)1948 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

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157.—162. *Decorated Eggs*

the color. When the wax is removed, the ornaments appear in white. A great variety of shades is obtained by using a series of colored baths. Some of the designs used in pottery are retained, such as firs, rosaces, stars, dots, zigzags, a few types of flowers, but the design is small and condensed, it covers the egg with a network of lace. The potter turns goldsmith. These designs have distinct names, the adder, chicken's feet, the rake, butterflies, snow crystals. But these names are more or less symbolical and have only a very distant connection with the corresponding design. In general the background is dark, black or dark brown, blue or red. It resembles island wood more than egg shell.

Besides wood and ceramics, work on textiles, wool, cotton and particularly linen is one of the richest and most ancient branches of popular art. On Latvian territory tissues of the Iron Age have been discovered, with metal ornaments resembling those still in use in Lithuania, but in wool. Prototypes of the latter must certainly also have existed. Later certain

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10!Baltrušaitis R-4, 5 (no date) 1948 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

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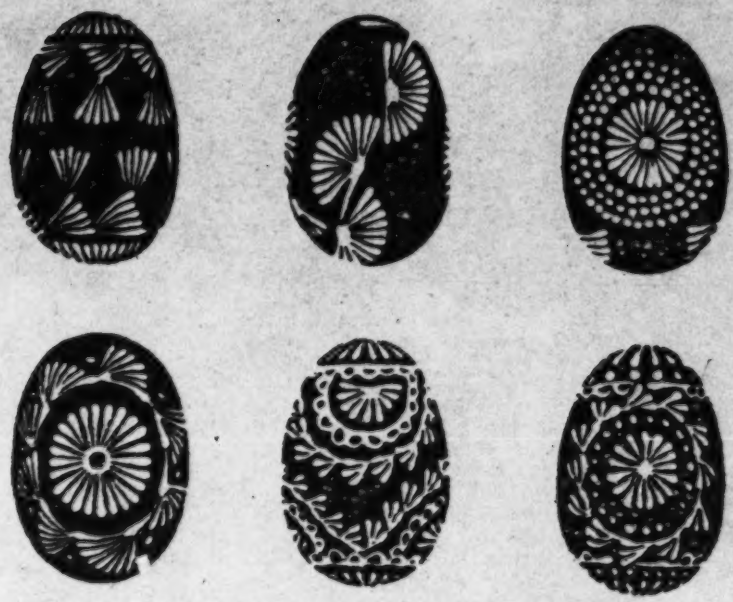
163.—168. Decorated Eggs, Pattern scratched with Knife

531 elements may have been imported from the East. The word *"kilimas"*,
286 which means carpet, is directly derived from the Asiatic *kelims*. Unfortunately their patterns have not been preserved, but the foreign inventories of the 17th century assign them a good place. Linen and fabrics have always been renowned and were exported as far as Hungary.

Tissues, embroideries made for the decoration of the home or of clothes are the work of women. They make them by hand and by means of archaic devices, such as the spinning-wheel, distaff, spindle and loom, which have undergone but little change in the course of centuries. Linen is used alone or mixed with cotton for sheets, table-cloths, napkins and towels. In the large cloths, which are so solid that they are handed on from generation to generation, the damask decoration is of an infinite variety. Raw linen and bleached linen, linen mixed with cotton threads intercrossed in all directions combine to bring forth designs in checks, stars or intersec-



169.—174. Decorated Eggs, Pattern laid on with Bees-Wax

ting circles. Designs in gray on gray, which are sometimes very intricate, produce light effects which relieve the austerity of the material used. Towels are made on the occasion of a birth. They are also used to cover a coffin. Being much smaller than sheets, they require smaller cleverly laid out designs. In the district of Biržai they are often given a colored band along the edge, generally red, but sometimes blue, or long plaited fringes. The lace that sometimes borders them is made with a needle or a spindle.

Colors are sometimes used in the cloths, but chiefly in clothing. Two items are of special interest, the "*fuostos*" and the "*žiurstai*", i. e. belts and aprons. In the former the most ancient designs are preserved, whereas the latter are remarkable for the splendor and richness of their decoration. The *fuostos* make use of several techniques and of different looms, some of which are complicated, whereas others are so rudimentary that a shep-

[Errata: should be items, cf. Errata Sheet, P. 204, Cat. 116 --- Analyst]

herdess can work them while watching the cattle. They are made of woven, plaited or sewn strips. Originally they were made of wool, but later bleached or coarse linen and even cotton bought in town were added.

The most ancient belts were plaited. They are decorated with simple zigzags and only in a few tones, white, red, blue. Some of them may still be found in the neighbourhood of Zarasai, Panevėžys and Ukmergė, but they become increasingly rare. The sewn *juostos* of Suvalkai (Suvalki) too are seldom to be found. The method most frequently employed is weaving. The primitive specimens show but few colors, blue green, red, rarely black and white, with a brownish border. With the Dzūkai Lithuanians of the region of Merkinė, Alytus and Pūnia, white and red, prevail, but the scales show a a tendency to increase. Nevertheless, red, green, and yellow prevail. The designs are geometrical and formed of interwoven threads. Designs à la Grecque, swastikas with ramified branches, rosaces and complicated polygones are worked in lozenges, squares and crosses. Also ladders, hooks, angles, windows, rakes, goat's hooves, nuts, four-and fivefold eyes. The ornaments crowd together and form new designs, an uninterrupted series of straight lines and angles. The principal parts of the design occupies the centre of the strip. A double row of ornamentation appears on broad belts. Each side of the belt is framed by two small independent friezes.

Aprons are made by more skilful methods, certain techniques resemble those of the *kilimai*. The ornaments are often handsewn, and various systems are employed on the same apron. The preparation of the frame itself requires more care. The threads are colored by the weaver herself and work proceeds slowly. On a background of dark blue, garnet or green and even black, large designs are worked in linen or cotton. They are fleur de lys, idealized roses, or red, violet, blue and yellow tulips. The designs are combined in crosses, rosaces, zigzags, in solid broad ornaments, that remind one of the sumptuousness and the violent coloring of the ancient Spanish tissues. They are sub-divided into horizontal bands. The design is sometimes spread over the surface, sometimes it is framed by rays. Such designs, standing out against the background, maintain the character of a coat of arms. The tulip, one of the four flowers dear to the decoration of the East, which has been known in this country ever since prehistoric times, appears there as an emblem. These *žiurstai* are worn everywhere, but they all of them come from Suvalkai, the district of

1/n [Errata: should be tendency. cf. Errata Sheet, p. 204, cat. 116, --- Analyst]

Mariampolé and of Kalvarija. At Klaipéda their decoration consists of several finely embroidered horizontal strips. They are not only ornaments, but also symbols of virtue. In some villages it is considered improper to be seen without an apron. Once, at a market, a woman was asked to sell her apron and she considered herself outraged.

The other parts of the dress of a peasant woman are: a linen shirt with wide plaited sleeves, trimmed with small embroidered designs, a very ample woollen skirt, sometimes dark and plain and sometimes striped or of a Scottish pattern, gathered at the waist and a sleeveless vest, the *"kiklikas"*, a kind of corslet often made of valuable brocade, which made its first appearance in the early 19th century. According to Mr. Galauné, the first specimens were perhaps imported by the soldiers of Napoleon's "Grande Armée", on their retreat from Russia. In the neighbourhood of Klaipéda, the *kiklikai* are of dark velvet. Necklets of coral and especially of amber are worn on the neck. Their beads, either raw or cut in facets with a knife, have not only the value of gems, but are endowed with magic qualities, they belong to times gone by and to legend. These fossil drops of resin, which have been described by Tacitus and were sold by Ligurian traders who imported them into the countries of the Mediterranean and Black Sea area, where they were deemed to be more precious than gold and who therefore jealously kept the secret of their origin, often contained imprisoned insects and other mementoes of olden times.

Young girls wear on their heads a band of tissue held at the back by a flow of colored ribbons, married women wear instead *"nuometas"*, a sort of white veil several meters long, which is of Eastern origin, but was also adopted in the West, and Tertullian recommended its use. At first this fashion found but few followers and was later abandoned, but it became the rule for married women from 1300 until 1500. During that time a large number of themes of sculptural models were imported into Lithuania, the survivals of which have been described above. It is possible that this fashion followed the same route. And do not certain weavers, with their dour yet finely cut profiles encircled in white, resemble some statues of the Middle Ages? The veil with its folds and its ritual knots is sacred, it bestows upon such as have taken it a certain measure of authority and of office. With their head-dress resembling that of the Saints of the Church, these peasant women would seem to belong to a religious order.

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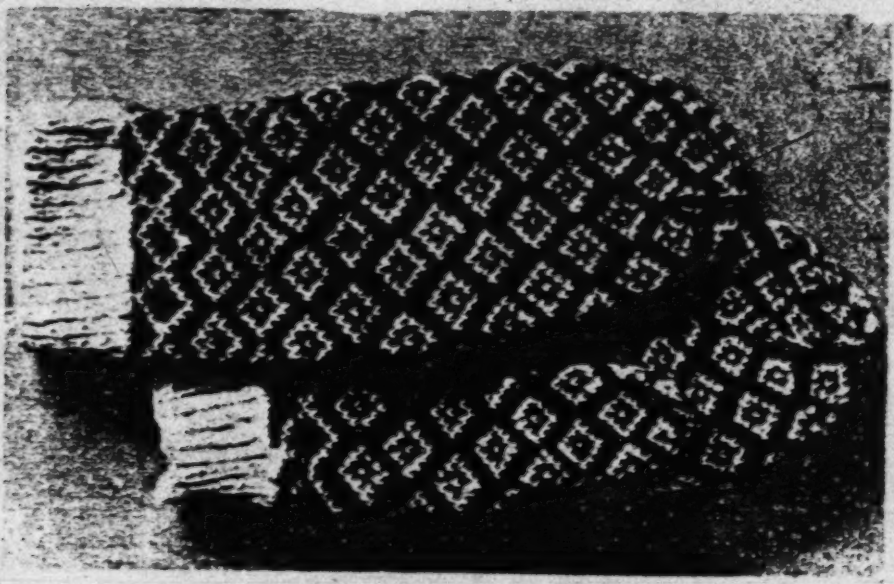

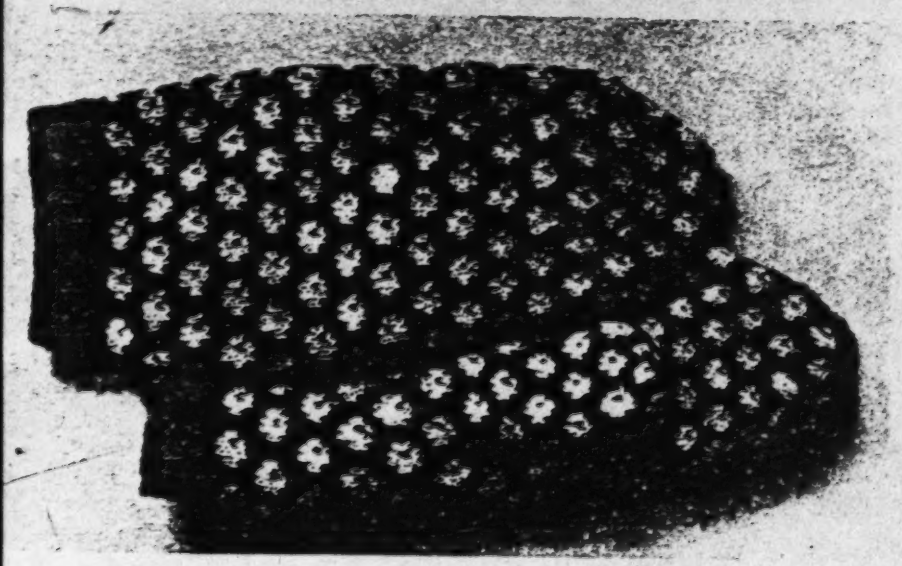

58.-59. Gloves
District of Telšiai

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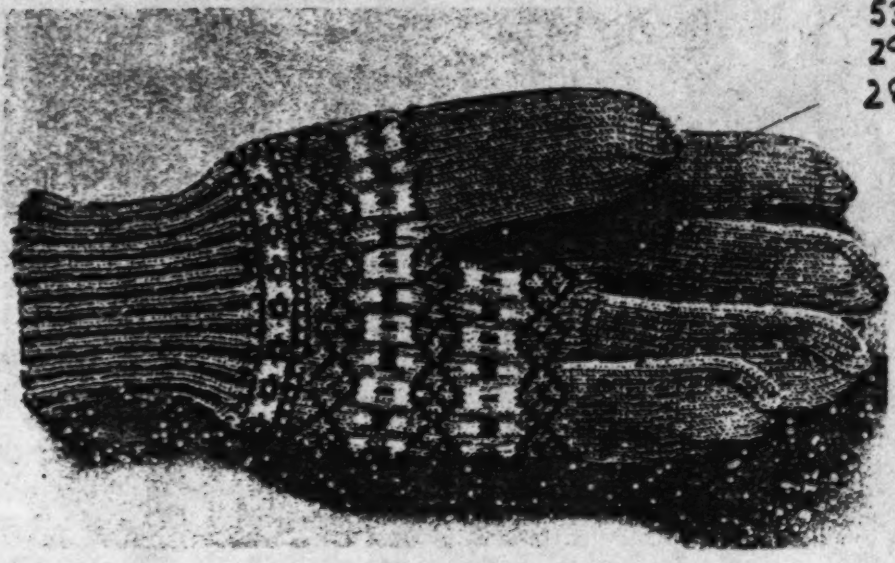

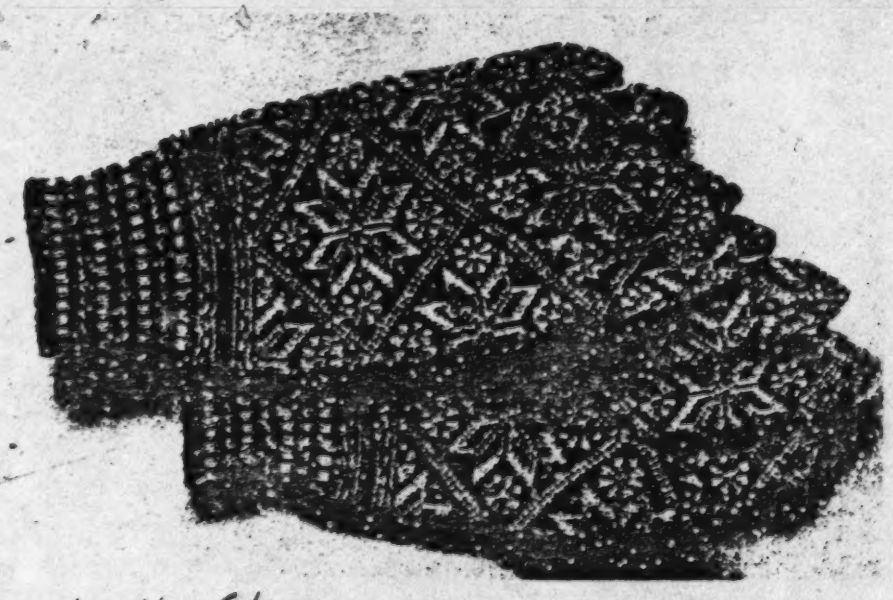

60.-61. Gloves
District of Telšiai and Klaipeda

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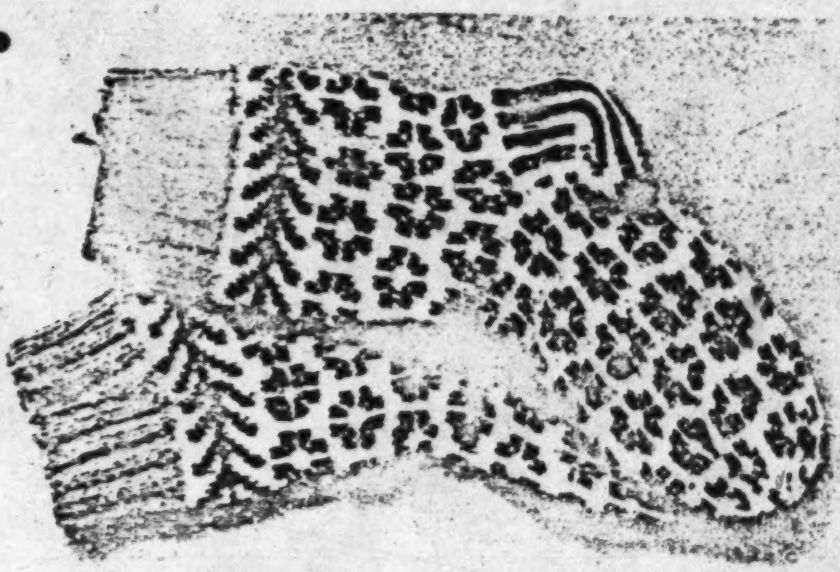

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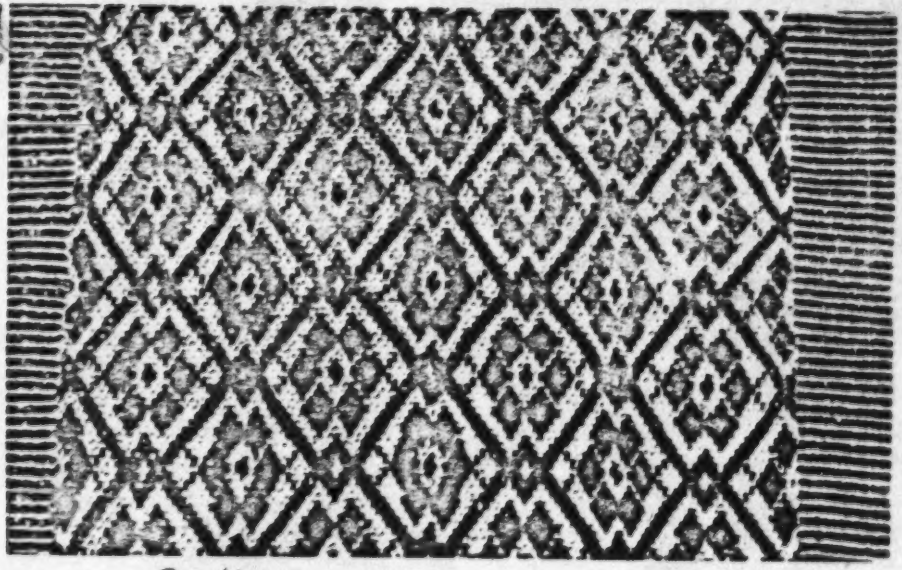

62. Socks
District of Kretinga

63. Carpet Design

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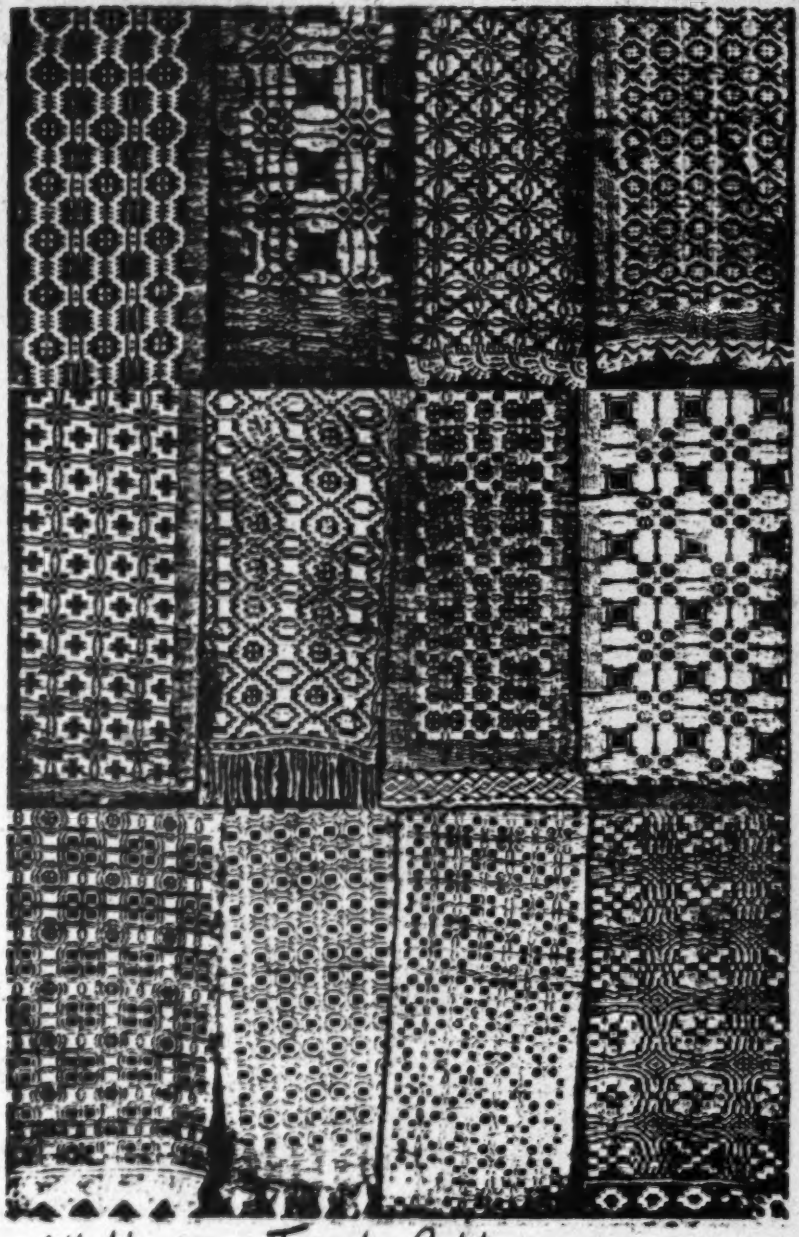

64. Various Towel Patterns

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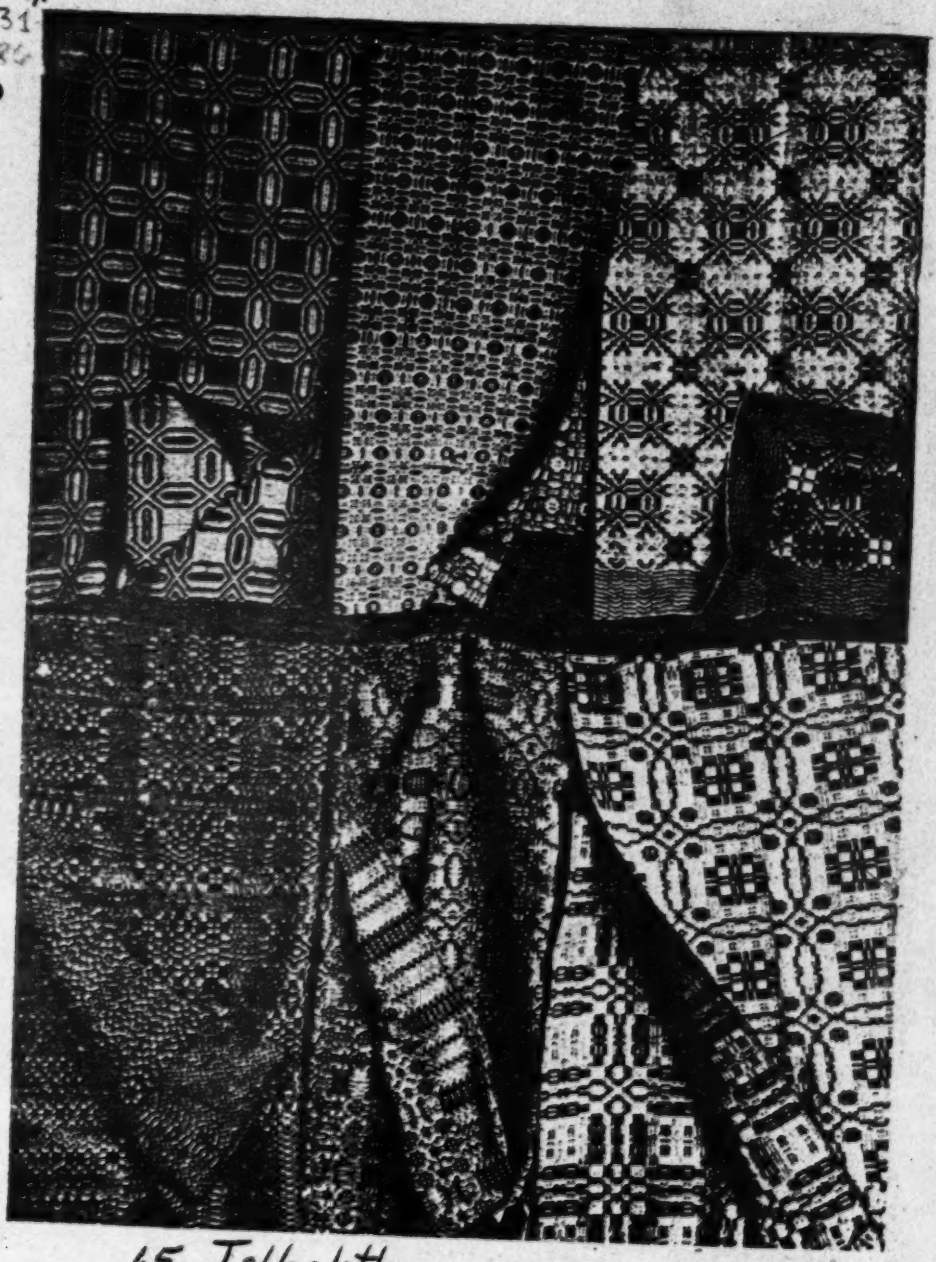

65. Tablecloths

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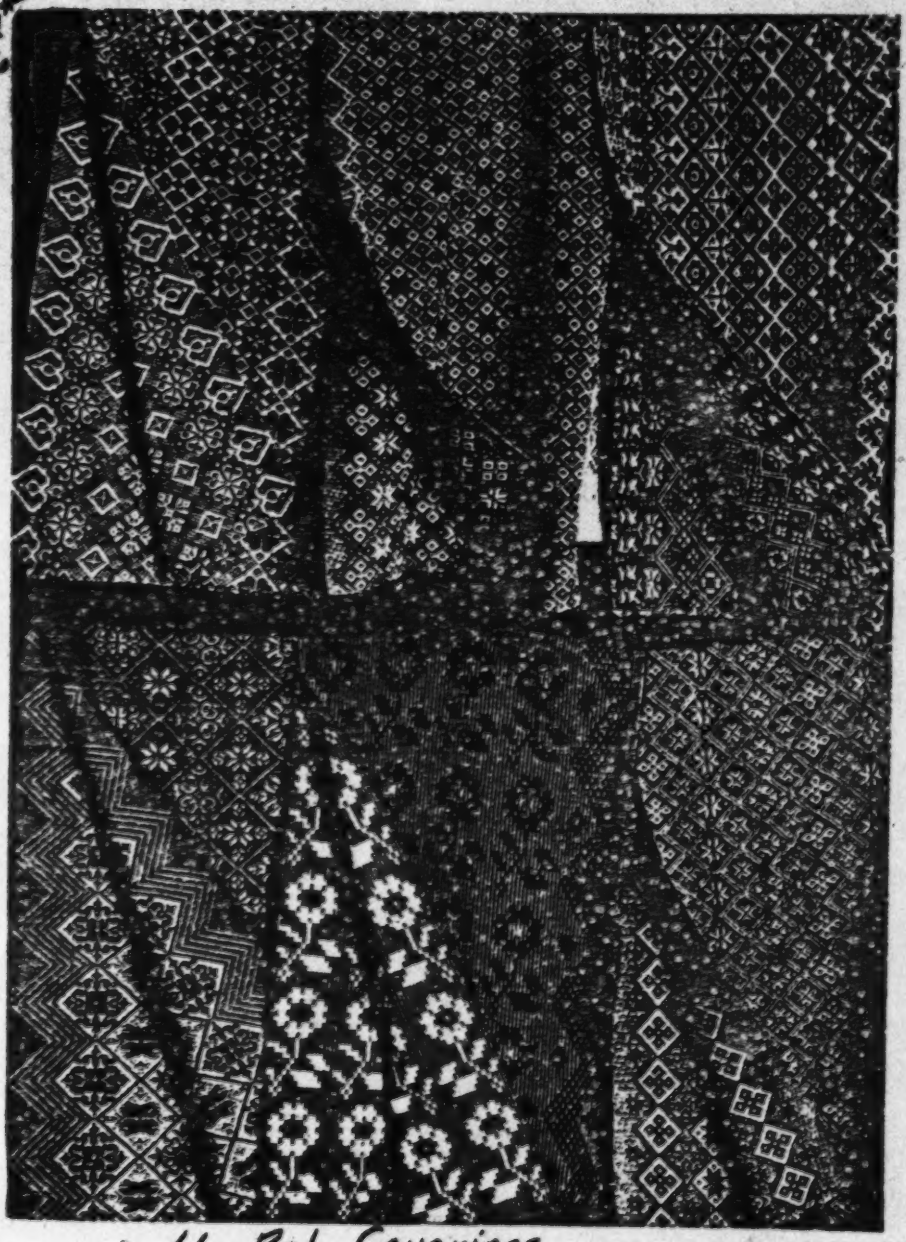

66. Bed Coverings

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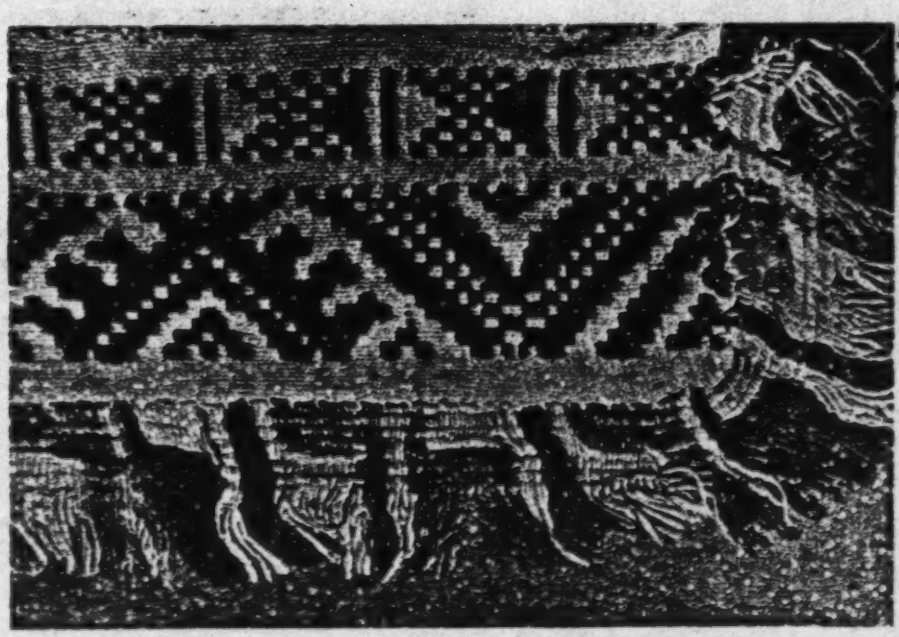

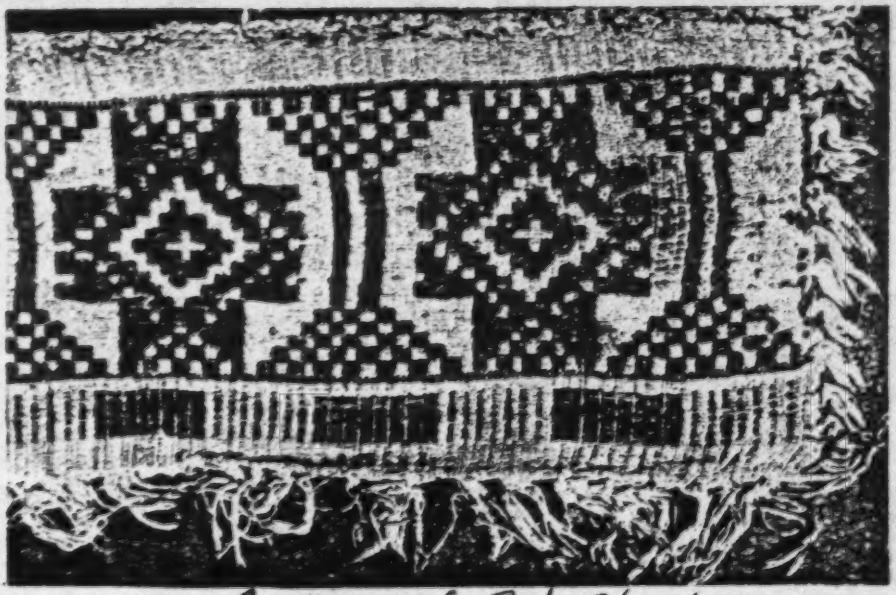

67.-68. Borders of Bed-Sheets

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69. Belts

10:Baltrušaitis R-4, 5 (no date) 1948 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

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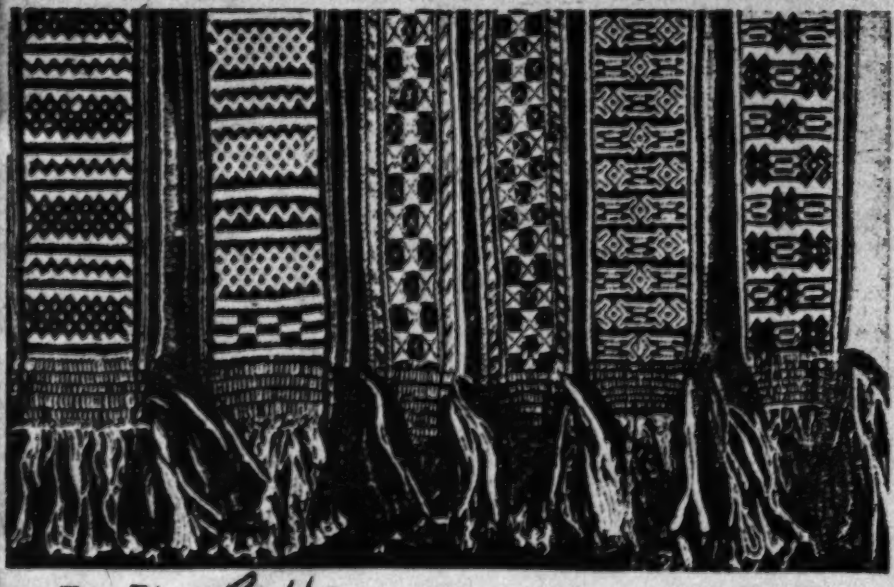

70.-71. Belts

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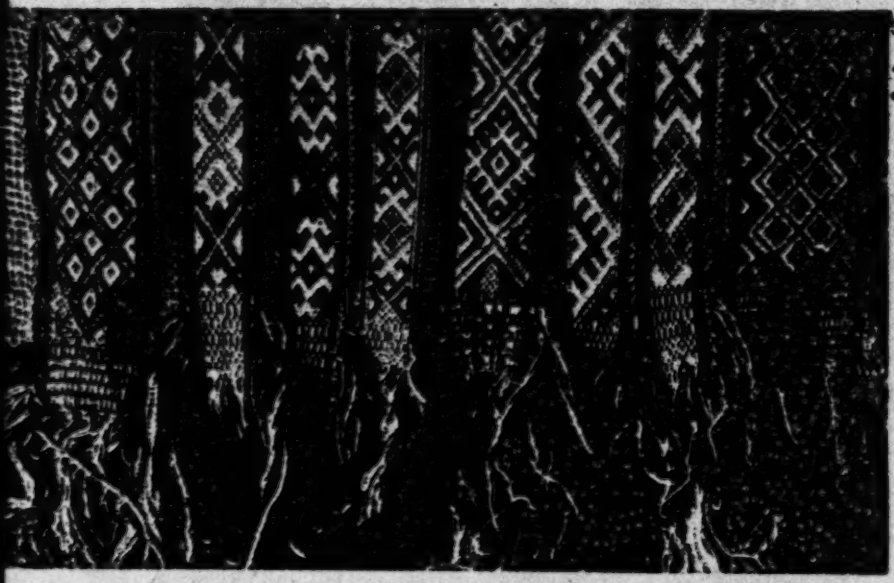

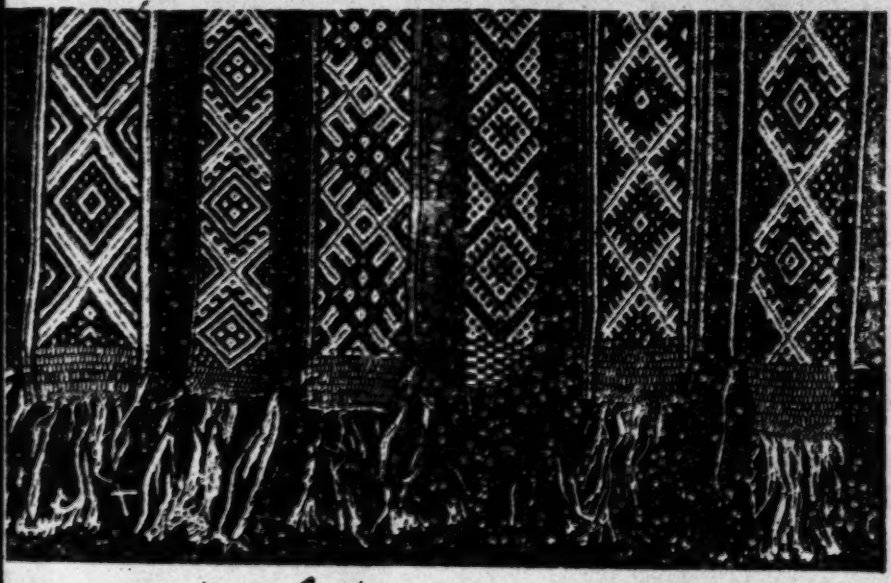

72.-73. Belts

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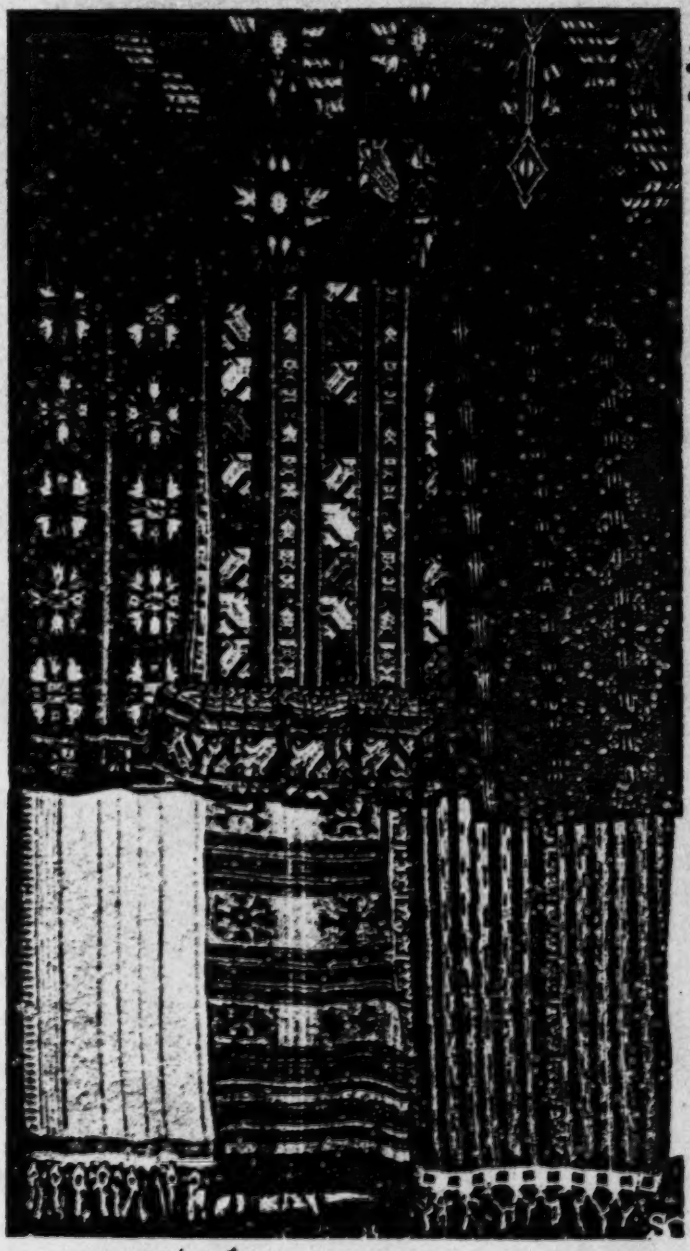

74. Aprons

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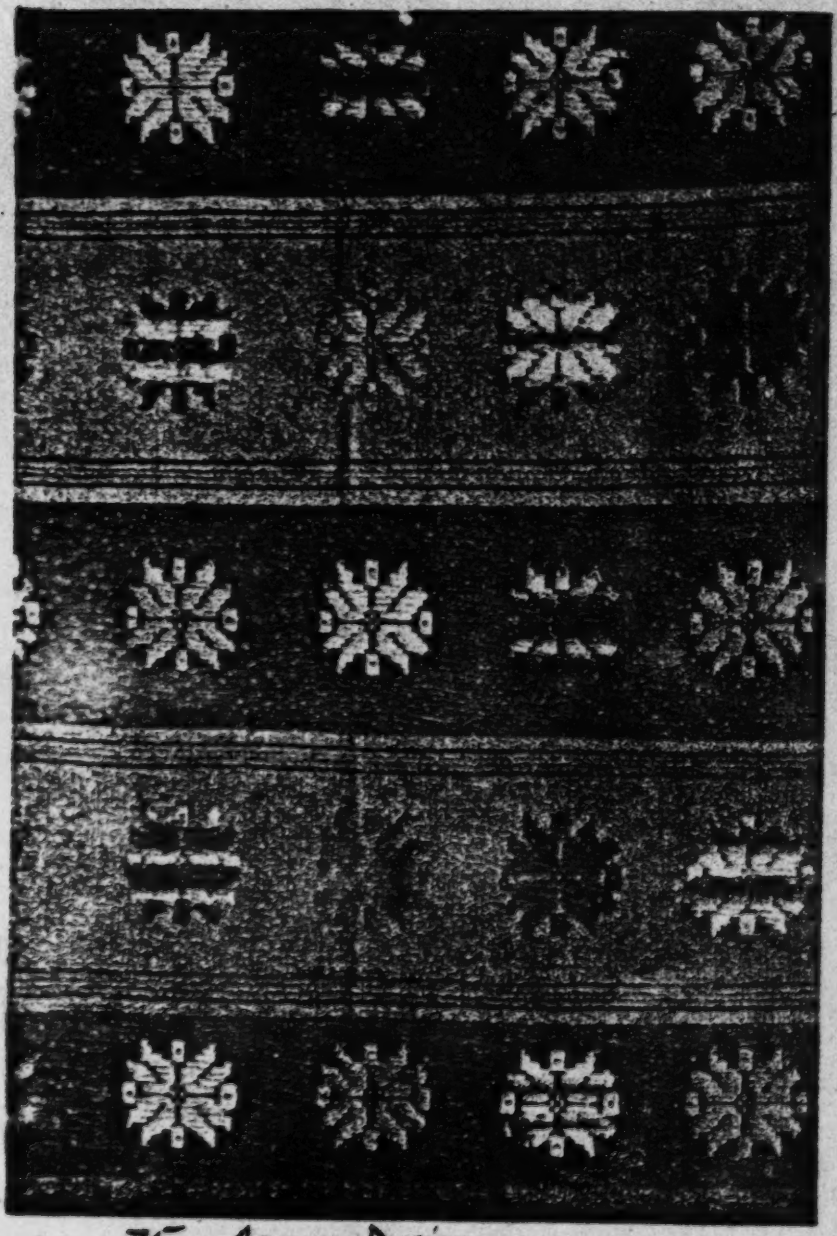

75. Apron-Design

531
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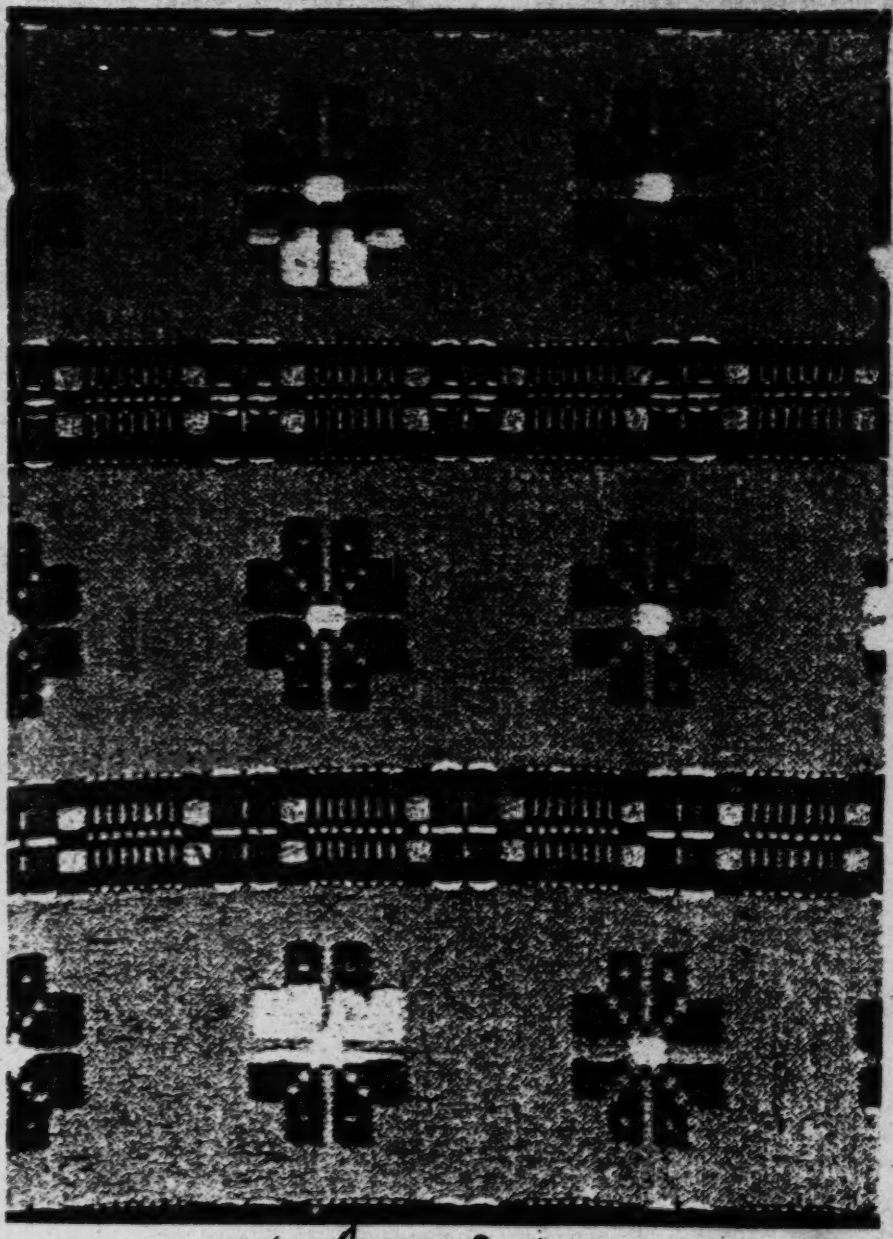
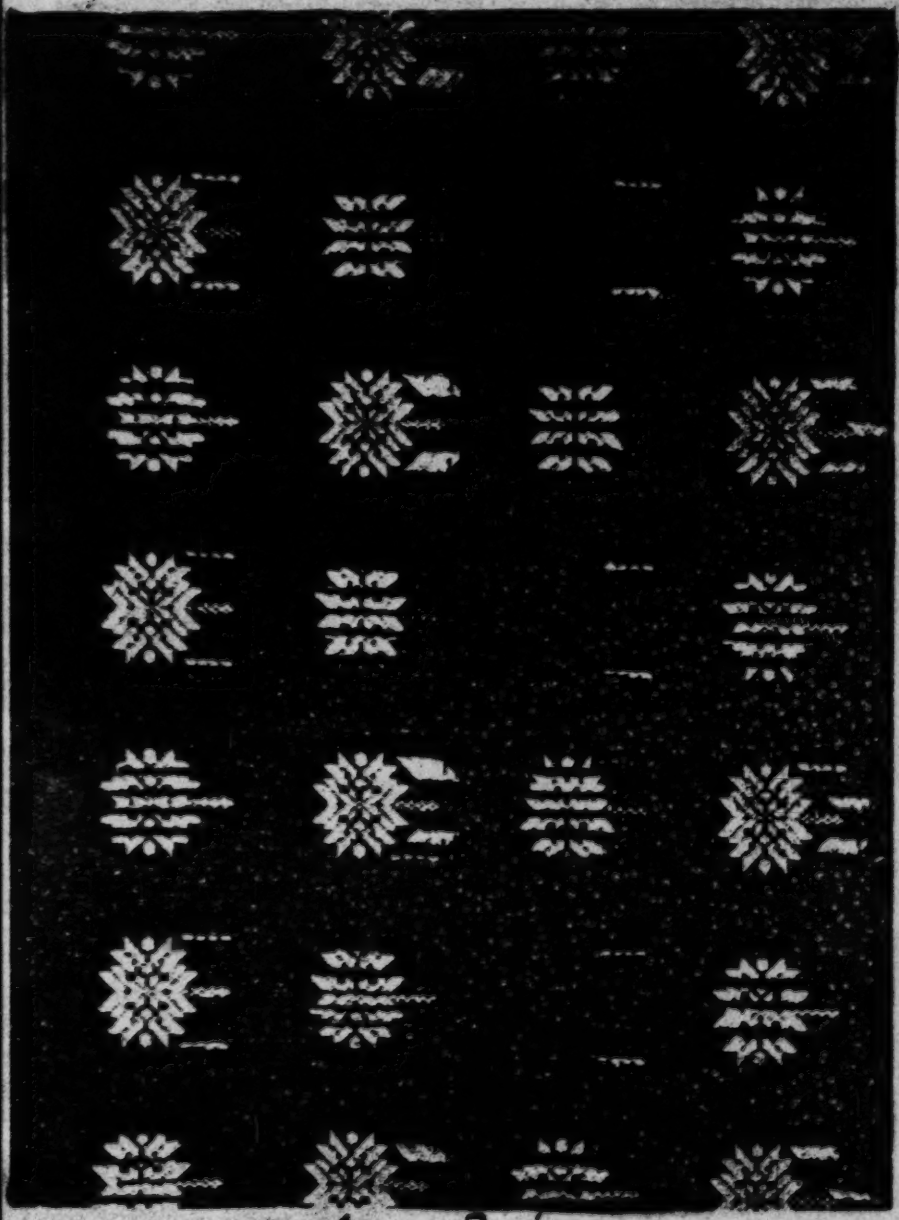


76. Apron-Design

535*
286



77. Apron-Design

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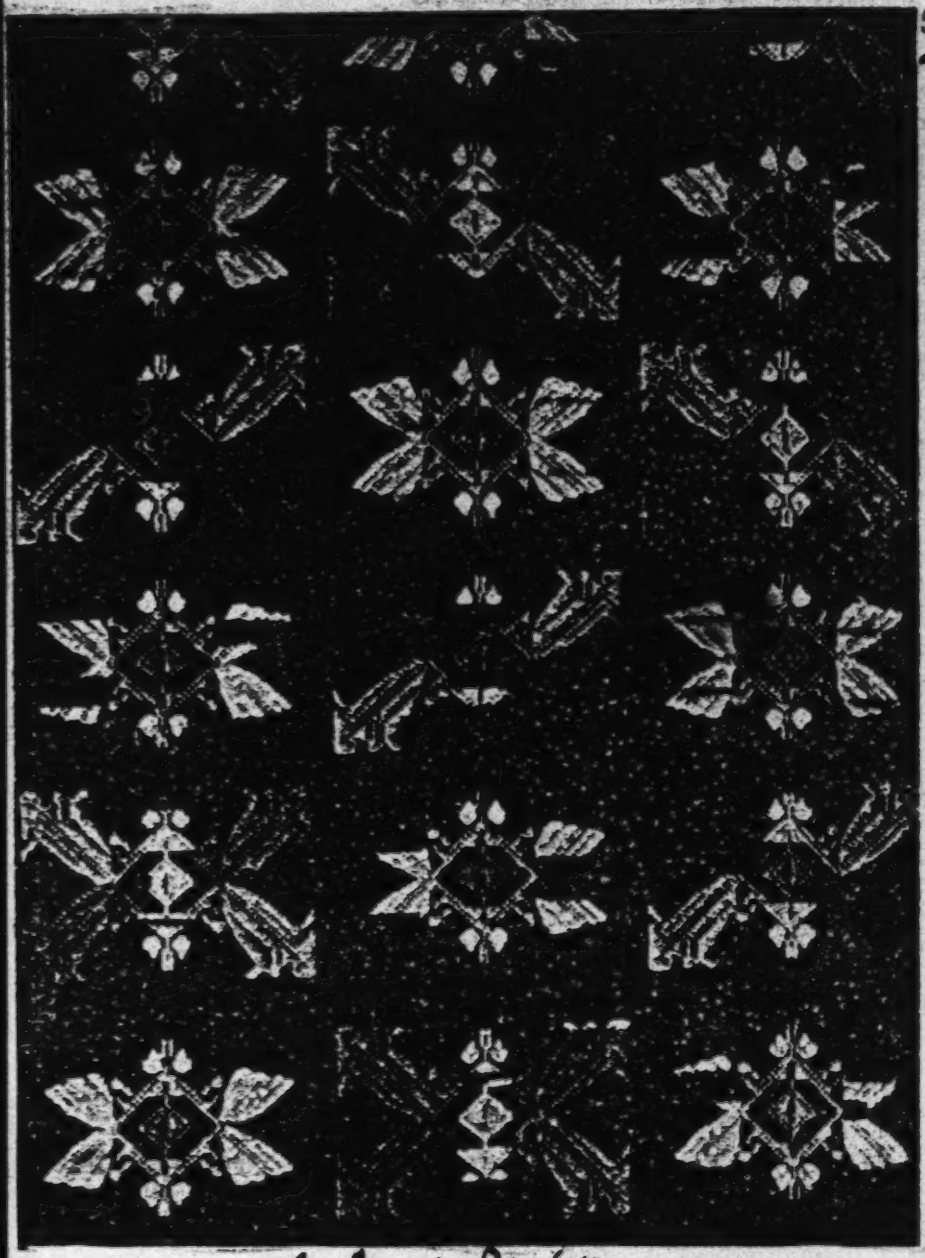

78. Apron - Design

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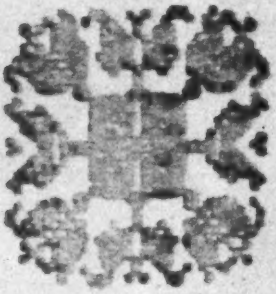

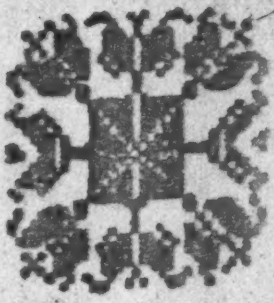

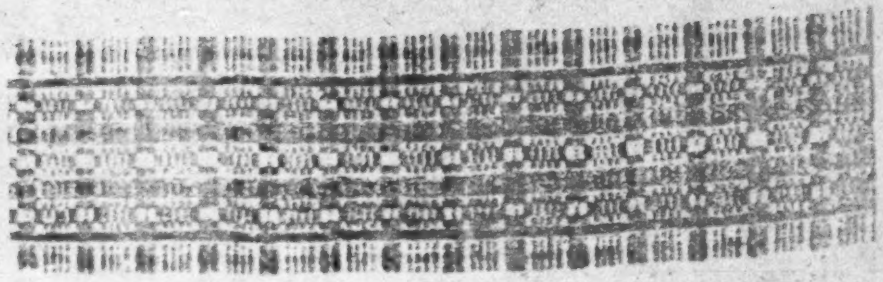

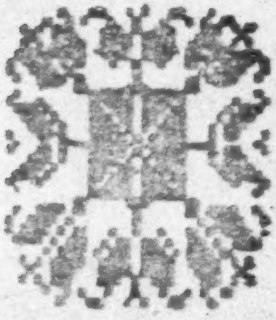

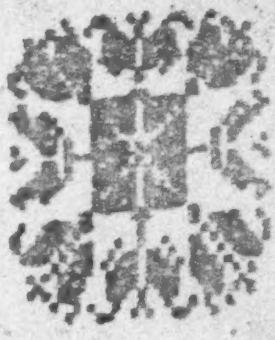

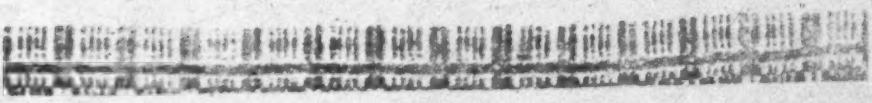

Apron Design

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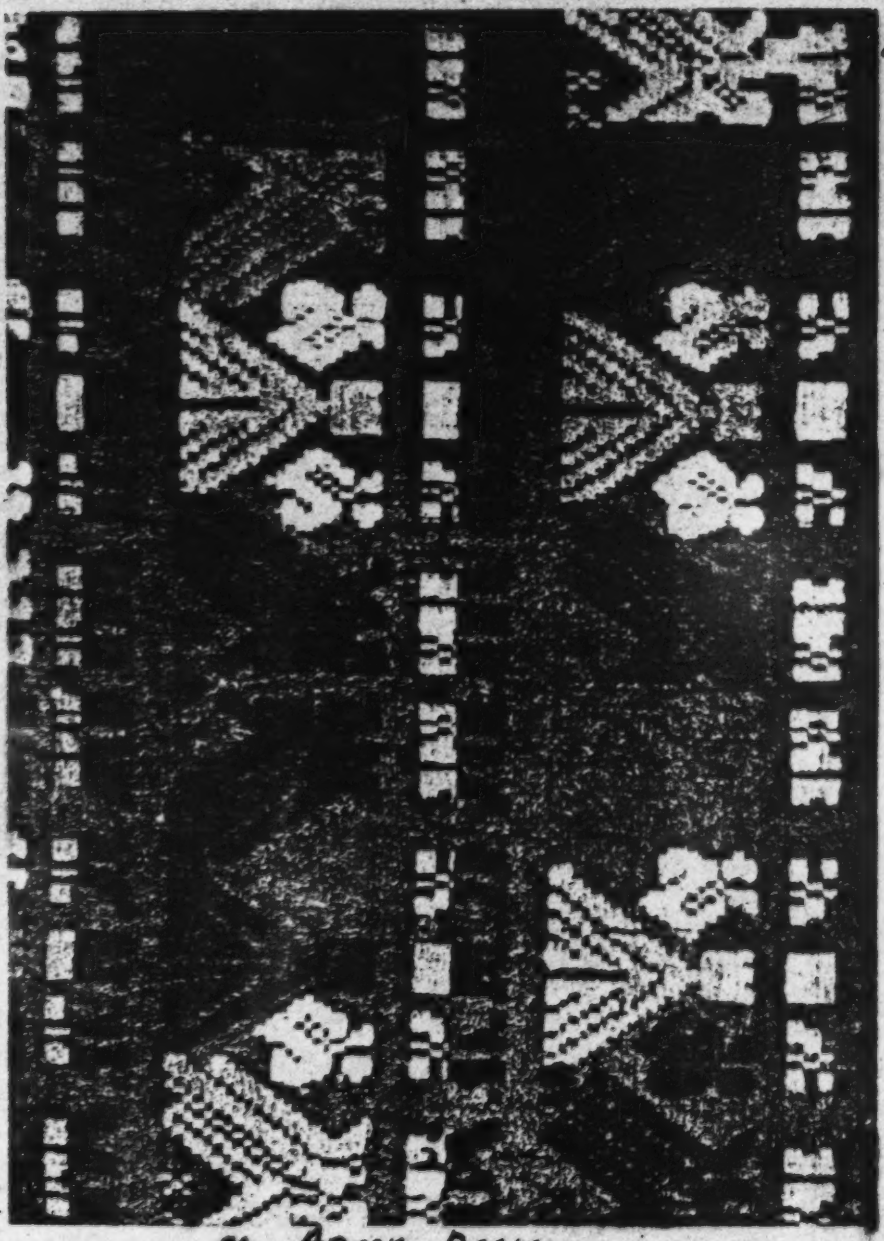

80. Apron- Design

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81. Apron-Design

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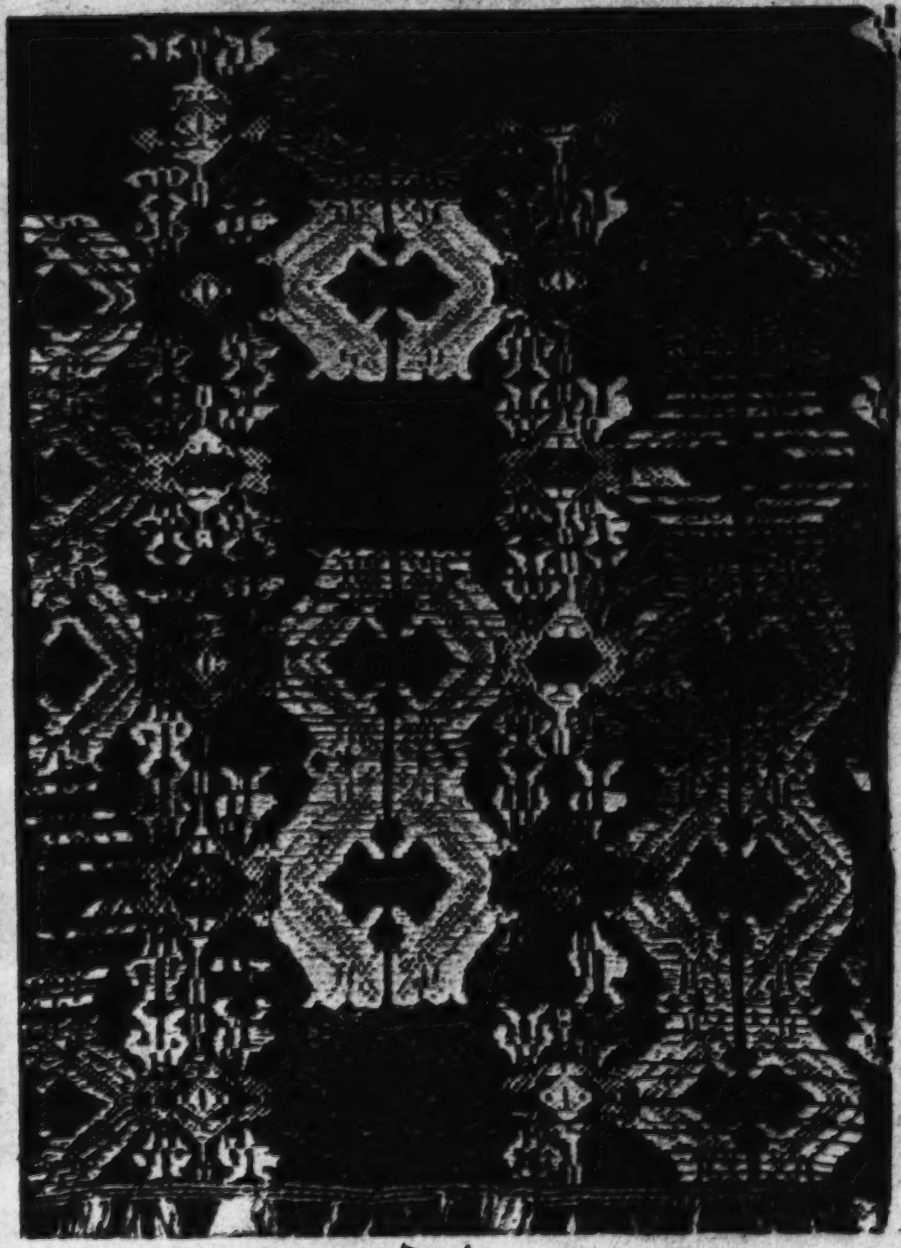

82. Apron- Design

11:League of Nations G-4 (no date) 1939 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

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Weaving.

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11:League of Nations G-4 (no date) 1939 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

286 462 With so much other work to do, the farmer's wife has little time nowadays for spinning and weaving. This is indeed how her artistic sense, cultivated for centuries, finds expression. There is a special material for every purpose and a special design for every material — for bed-linen and personal linen, pure linen weave; for towels and table linen, linen and cotton mixed, with hundreds of combinations of grey and white checks; for carpets and blankets, linen and woollen materials in brighter colours and bolder designs; for men's suits, woollen materials. The women's traditional costumes are still found in many districts, and attempts have recently been made to extend the use of national costumes in general. Every corner of Lithuania has its own traditions, designs and combinations of colours. The designs of the costumes bear witness to an original taste in art, while the choice of colours is remarkably 572 finely conceived. Again, a great variety of exquisite detailed designs is found in the Easter eggs. Only the son of a Lithuanian woman who had grown up in an atmosphere of mystic legends could have created the Lithuanian "Smūtkelis", the saints in the little chapels standing by the roadside, the amazing Samogitian crosses.

To recall the situation of the country before the war is to realise the importance of the humble peasant woman's rôle. During foreign domination when there were practically no books written in the national language and no Lithuanian schools, the peasant woman was the guardian of the Lithuanian language, customs and art and the inspirer of the national conscience when her sons returned home for the holidays after studying at schools which offered them only the foreign culture of the country's oppressors. The Lithuanian woman's personal beliefs and convictions revealed her integrity and sense of justice. A gentle poetry and original philosophy of life imbued the songs and tales and proverbs which she transmitted to her children. The lore she handed down to her daughters, her simple replies to their questions, reflected an exquisite beauty of character and the finest intelligence. Her bearing was marked by nobility, by a consciousness of her dignity, far above what might be regarded as corresponding to her station in life; in her relations with different classes of society, she exhibited remarkable tact and a keen sense of diplomacy.

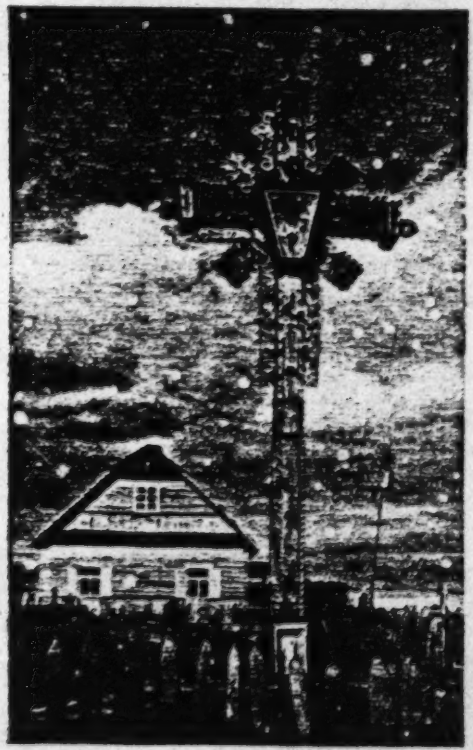
The Lithuanian peasant woman has preserved this natural dignity notwithstanding the profound transformation of the whole life of the country. The school with its army of teachers — about 60% are women — the Lithuanian book, the national Press adapted to the requirements of the various social classes, officials and private economic and cultural activities, the agrarian reform, the breaking-up of communal lands into individual

11:League of Nations G-4 (no date) 1939 RB5 Lithuanians RB5

IX. PEASANT ART AND FOLKLORE. ORGANISATION OF LEISURE

532 From time immemorial, the villagers have been fond of manual work. By the roadside, religious monuments decorated with original designs may be seen, such as crosses and chapels; in the villages, wooden churches and belfries and attractive wooden buildings, with original carvings, have been erected.

[415] In the houses themselves, the equipment and the domestic utensils are also made by hand. Furniture, spindles, linen-beaters, towel-pegs, nut-crackers are characteristic objects of peasant art. The girls were always fond of spinning, weaving and [286] knitting. When they married, they brought with them from their home a generous supply of cloth, towels, table-cloths, bed-covers, gaily coloured dresses, etc. At weddings, in particular, it was the custom to make presents of belts, towels, cloth, etc.



Crucifix.

After the world war, when Lithuania became independent, the cultural level rose; the old articles of peasant art, with their primitive forms, no longer fulfilled modern requirements. The Chamber of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Union of Young Farmers' Clubs, accordingly endeavoured to encourage cottage handicrafts, adapting them to modern conditions.

A series of courses was organised for peasant craftsmen, to teach them new methods and familiarise them with modern tools, better raw materials and modern shapes (for which artists prepared designs based on the traditional peasant styles.